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Should this not be feasible owing to the lack of time a very short exposure to the air, aided by thorough shaking or brushing, will soon effect the elimination of the formaldehyd from the fabrics subjected to its action. As in the preceding case no ammonia is necessary for neutralization.

WALTER WYMAN,
Surgeon-General U. S. M. H. S.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR USING THE GENERATOR.

Full directions for operating the generator accompany each apparatus, but it is thought well to call attention to the following points:

1. The pan containing water, which surrounds the alcohol reservoir, should contain about 3 pints of water, which will fill it to within one-half inch of the top. The water used should be as pure as possible, and an ample quantity should be provided, as by its water-seal action it not only prevents accident, but its gradual evaporation tends to slightly hydrate the gas evolved from the decomposition of the alcohol.

2. The generator should not be heated more than one to one and one-half minutes, and great care should be taken to see that the flame is extinguished before immersing the end of the cylinder in the water reservoir. If this precaution is neglected, combustion continues, the alcohol is consumed, but no formaldehyd gas is evolved, and consequently no germicidal effect is produced.

3. The absorbent material in the alcohol reservoir will easily absorb 1 quart or 1,000 c. c. of alcohol, and in case of emergency 3 pints or 1,500 c. c. may be used, but care should be exercised that no free alcohol should show above the packing material in the reservoir. Should this be the case, the superfluity should be removed before ignition.

4. At the conclusion of the operation the remaining water should be drained from the water pan, and the pan dried. The whole apparatus should then be wiped off with a cloth, and this care will result in longer life of the apparatus, which is a decided advantage, as apart from the question of economy, the older platinized disks seem to give better results and to evolve more gas than those recently prepared.

As has been indicated above, the apparatus should not be relied upon for the disinfection of the interior of mattresses, pillows, and heavily wadded quilts or comfortables. For these articles it is believed that the employment of steam will still be necessary, but a preliminary disinfection of the exposed surfaces of these articles by the formaldehyd generator will, it is thought, render the transportation of these articles to the steam chamber, and their handling by those engaged in disinfection processes, free from the danger which has heretofore attended these operations.